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MONDAY, APRIL 12, 1858.

JOHN KELLS INGRAM, LL. D., Vice-President, in the Chair.

REV. CHARLES B. GIBSON, Edmund T. Palmer, and Thomas Brooke, Esqrs., were elected Members of the Academy.

The CHAIRMAN read the following Address, presented on the 19th of March last, to his Excellency the Earl of EGLINTON and WINTON, Lord Lieutenant, &c. &c., of Ireland:—

“MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—In my own name as President, and in that of the Council and Members of the Royal Irish Academy who accompany me, I have solicited this interview with your Excellency, for the purpose of presenting to you our respectful congratulations on your arrival in Dublin, to occupy for the second time the high and responsible office of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Your Excellency’s former residence amongst us has made you acquainted with the literary and scientific institutions of this city; and it is therefore unnecessary for us to inform you that the Royal Irish Academy has been incorporated, and has laboured for more than seventy years, to promote the study of science, *belles lettres*, and the antiquities of Ireland. We trust that we are not guilty of any presumption when we express our conviction that the institution of this Academy has been eminently useful to Ireland. It has fostered and rewarded the pursuit of science and sound learning; it has brought together on a common ground men who have differed widely on political and religious questions, and the meetings of the Academy have ever exhibited that mutual forbearance and good will which are necessary for the calm discussion of scientific questions, and morally so desirable in this country. We have established, principally from the private contributions of our members and the liberality of individual donors, a Museum of Irish Antiquities, which has now acquired some reputation as illustrating the manners and customs of the nations that formed one of the great waves of migration of the human race. We have recently published a Descriptive Catalogue of one of the departments of this Museum, with a view to make its contents known to the learned of Great Britain and of Europe, and the immediate completion of the work is only delayed by the limited funds at our disposal. We have formed also a Library, to which her Majesty’s Government has lately made some very valuable donations, by giving us the topographical and antiquarian materials collected for the Ordnance Survey of Ireland, and more recently some duplicate volumes of very useful newspapers and important Parliamentary papers removed from the Irish Office in London. Our Library consists chiefly of the transactions of sister scientific Academies—British and foreign—and of such books and manuscripts as relate particularly to the history, the literature, and the antiquities of Ireland. All Members can borrow books from our Library, and it is open, with necessary restrictions, to all who are properly introduced. By our Charter your Excellency is appointed, *ex officio*, the Visitor of the Royal Irish Academy, and

we trust you will find leisure from your more important and higher duties to relax occasionally by doing us the honour of attending some of our meetings, and examining the remains of ancient Irish art and literature which are preserved in our Museum and Library. We beg to express our anxious hope that the period of your Excellency's administration in Ireland may prove an era distinguished by the promotion of peace and prosperity, the development of the industrial resources of the country, and the advancement of those literary and scientific pursuits to which the Royal Irish Academy is more especially devoted."

HIS EXCELLENCY returned the following reply :—

"GENTLEMEN,—It gives me much pleasure to meet a deputation from so distinguished a body, and to receive your congratulations on my re-appointment to the government of Ireland. The years that have passed since I was in Dublin have not driven from my recollection the history of your Society, or the knowledge of the beneficial effect which such a Society as yours has in promoting scientific attainments, not only in the city, but over the whole country. Any institution or any pursuit which brings together with a common or a praiseworthy object men who differ in religion and political questions is well worthy of support; and as I am by my official position the Visitor of your Academy, I hope I may have an occasional opportunity of relaxing and improving my mind by a glance at the curiosities which you have amassed."

JOHN R. KINAHAN, M. D., read the following paper—

ON OLDHAMIA, A GENUS OF CAMBRIAN FOSSILS.

IN certain schistose beds of the Cambrian series, as seen at Bray Head and other places in the county of Wicklow, and at Howth in the county of Dublin, are found masses of peculiar markings, which the eye readily recognises as casts of an animal belonging either to the Polyzoan or Hydrozoan alliance. Although at first sight there may, especially to an untutored eye, appear to be some resemblance between these markings, and the multiform shapes which masses of crystal assume, yet a consideration of their symmetrical regularity of form, their constancy of direction with regard to the bedding, their frequent occurrence and permanency of character in even dissimilar beds, situate at great distances from each other; their association with traces of the remains of animals of aquatic habits; and their close agreement in form with beings living at the present day,—lead us to dismiss as untenable every theory which would assign to them aught save an organized origin. Geologists of the present day, without hesitation, admit *Oldhamia*—as the genus founded for the reception of these fossils, in 1848, by Edward Forbes is called, in honour of Professor Oldham, who first noticed their existence

Fig. 1.